

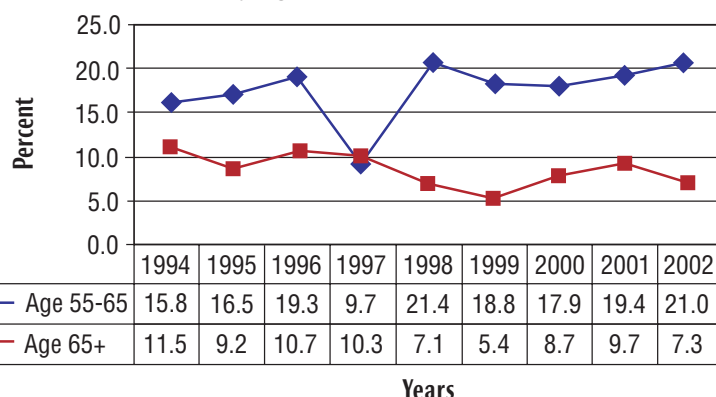
## FACT SHEET

## Smoking as You Get Older

Hawai'i State Department of Health

- In 2002, there were 196,000 adult current smokers in Hawai'i. About 21.0% (or 24,400) of these smokers were 55 years and older. The consequences of smoking increase with age and the number of years one has smoked. [1]

Prevalence of Older Smokers Grouped by Age, 1994-2002



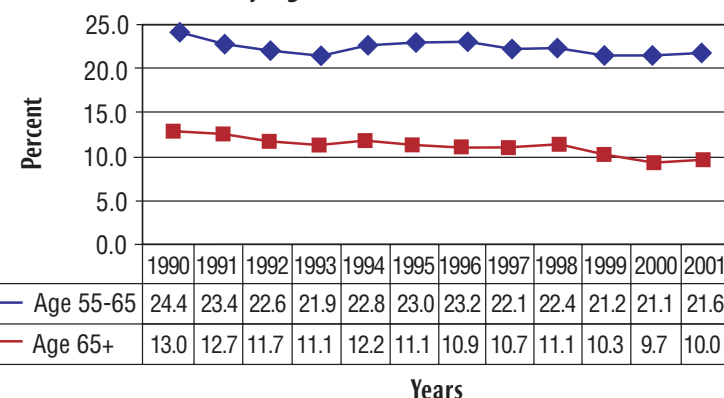
Data Source: Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, Hawai'i State Dept. of Health

- More than 400,000 Americans die each year from tobacco related causes. [2] One in three smokers dies prematurely (in the U.S.) losing an average of 12 to 15 years of life versus normal expectancy – thus resulting in elimination of retirement years for these people. [3]
- In the U.S., 94% of those ages 50 and over and 70% of those age 65 and over account for the annual tobacco related deaths. [3]
- There are over 13 million current smokers 50 years old and older, which

account for 27% of the adult smoking population. [3]

- Smoking costs Americans over \$97 billion annually in health care and lost productivity. [4]
- More than 1 in 4 Americans regularly smoke cigarettes. [5]

Prevalence of Older Smokers Grouped by Age, 1990-2001



Data Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

- Older Americans spend months and years in excruciating pain due to tobacco related diseases such as cancer, emphysema, heart disease and stroke; secondhand smoke also contributes to this problem. [3]
- Women who currently smoke and are postmenopausal have a lower level of bone density than nonsmokers do. [6]

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- Continued smoking can stimulate a thickening of the throat lining, eventually leading to throat cancer. 95% of oral and throat cancer cases are found in those 40 years old and over. [3]
- Other health problems associated with aging, such as hearing loss, dementia, and Alzheimer's have been linked to smoking. [3]
- The rate of impotence for male smokers between the ages of 40-70 is 24%. [7]
- Those exposed to secondhand smoke at home and in the workplace have the highest rate of impotence at 33%. [7]
- The number one cause of fires that kill older Americans is smoking. [3]

#### **Benefits of Quitting:**

##### **Immediate:**

- Within 20 minutes of quitting, blood pressure, pulse rate, and temperature return to normal. [3]

- A reduction in the risk of a heart attack begins within 24 hours. [3]
- Within 72 hours of quitting, the beneficial effects on the lungs are relaxation of bronchial tubes, easier breathing, and increased lung capacity. [3]

##### **Long Term Effects:**

- Within 3-5 years of cessation the risk of coronary heart disease falls to an equivalent level as a nonsmoker. [3]
- After 15 years the risk of lung cancer decreases almost to the level of a nonsmoker. [3]
- Quitting smoking will also reduce the risk of other tobacco-related cancers of the larynx, esophagus, pancreas, and urinary bladder. [3]

#### **REFERENCE:**

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